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Police Executive Leadership

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POLICE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

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INTRODUCTION

Police chief practitioners seldom author a book. This is unfortunate. There is much that could be learned from their shared experience. Writing is an onerous endeavor. I recall how greatly I disliked writing in high school and college. However when I became a police officer, I quickly learned that writing is very much involved with police work. I accepted its inevitability. As a chief of police I became comfortable with it. Consequently I authored several books regarding police management. The most recent two were entitled *How to Manage Your Police Department* and *A Police Chief's Handbook on Developmental and Power Management*.

However this book pertains to police leadership. It provides a practical model or pattern for police executives. This paradigm or model is presented from a practitioner's perspective. It provides a feasible and functional pattern. This pattern not only enhances police chief survival but also enhances leadership development. It provides a perspective for police chiefs and managers who aspire to become chiefs to better themselves without considering themselves better. This perspective focuses on results instead of process. It pertains to what and why instead of how and who. It is more concerned with substance than style. This is a leadership (not management) perspective.

The first two chapters are preliminary and foundational. The first chapter pertains to trends for the future and their implications for police leadership. Future social and economic change will have tremendous influence on policing in the last decade of this century and beyond the year 2000. The second chapter

distinguishes leadership from management. There is indeed a distinct difference. So much so that leadership often requires different people than management.

Chapters three through nine present the essence of the police executive leadership paradigm. Each of these chapters concisely describe an essential segment of police executive leadership. Each chapter highlights the important aspects of the leadership subject. Chapter three describes the crucial nature of leadership influence, vision and values. These three are presented within the context of influence of power, visionary leadership, and leadership by values.

Chapter four describes five critical leadership activities. These five activities are direction, development, delegation, decisions and discipline. These five activities are essential for successful, effective police leadership. The chapter also distinguishes the difference among supervisors, managers and executives insofar as these five critical activities pertain to leadership. Chapter five focuses on five police executive obligations. These obligations pertain to prescription, sanction, initiative, example and distance. These five imperatives form an ethic of *noblesse oblige* for police executive leadership.

Chapter six pertains to developing corporate strategy. Corporate strategy describes what is done, how it is done and why in achieving the police mission. Corporate strategy includes vision and values, teamwork, and a policing model. The policing model includes four various endeavors vital to mission achievement. These four include reactive, specialized, problem-solving, and community-based efforts.

Chapter seven focuses on enlisting support from public officials. Enlisting such support is a crucial police leadership responsibility. Police consultants and citizen task forces are presented as two viable means to enlist such support. Recommendations from police consultants or citizen task forces can be of tremendous assistance for chiefs of police. These recommendations can help overcome reluctance by public officials, address difficult issues, and implement controversial steps to remedy situations.

Chapter eight presents various methods to assess citizen perceptions. These assessment methods include radio call-in programs, neighborhood meetings, crime victim telephone calls

and letters, citizen questionnaires, neighborhood canvasses and citizen complaint programs. Chapter nine focuses on dealing with conflict. The chapter includes conflict-analysis considerations regarding the nature of and reasons for differences which result in conflict. The nature of differences usually involve facts, goals, methods or values. The reasons for difference are usually informational or perceptual. At times role differences can also result in conflict.

The book concludes with four timely topics. Chapter ten pertains to mayor, city manager and police chief relations. The chapter includes a politician's profile, mayor and city manager expectations, and the critical nature of compatibility among priorities, practices and preferences. Performance-evaluation considerations are also included in the chapter. Chapter eleven deals with criticism and discouragement. The chapter addresses police chief vulnerability to discouragement and anxiety. Common causes of discouragement are identified. Criticism is placed in proper perspective insofar as its implications for leadership are concerned. Chapter twelve focuses on several contemplative ponderables. The chapter describes three alternatives to a critical decision for police chief executives. This decision has tremendous implications regarding leadership. The chapter also describes four general periods or stages regarding police chief tenure. Chapter thirteen pertains to self-management. This is an important subject for the concluding chapter because self-management is foundational for leadership. The chapter summarizes what self-management involves. It also describes the essential characteristics and conduct of police chief executives who effectively manage themselves.

During the last decade of this century and beyond the year 2000, there will be greater need for successful and effective police executive leadership. There will be compelling governmental and community issues which demand a leadership emphasis. The leadership paradigm presented in this book can enhance police chief survival and influence. It can improve executive discernment. It can encourage visionary leadership with a renewed sense of purpose and direction. The paradigm also provides an insightful perspective to enhance the success and effectiveness of police chief executives and police managers.

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POLICE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 1

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICE LEADERSHIP

Introduction

In 1960 I accepted my first appointment as a police officer. It was a tremendous privilege to take that oath of office. Annual salary was \$4,600 for a regular 44 hour work week. There was considerable overtime in addition to the 44 hours, but no overtime pay or compensatory time. Uniforms, leather gear and firearm were personally purchased. There was no pension plan. There was relatively little training compared to current standards. There were frequent occasions when I used personal time to attend police training courses. I thought nothing of working alone at night with little or no back up. Many times vehicle stops and arrests were made without the assistance of other officers. There were no portable radio communications when away from the patrol car. Sometimes I was the only officer assigned to a five square mile area. I relied upon my own skills and abilities and accepted such conditions of the job with considerable pride and satisfaction. Most current police officers would think these work conditions were somewhat primitive.

Since 1960 there has been considerable change for police agencies. A four year study program in police administration at Indiana University and a basic police academy at Michigan State University partially prepared me for the changes of the 1960's. I was fairly well prepared in the technical aspects of criminal law and procedure, patrol procedures, arrest techniques, investigation, crime scene procedures, photography, fingerprinting, firearms, etc. I was fairly well prepared for the subsequent U.S. Supreme Court decisions of the 1960's regarding police practices

and the federal bill of rights. But I wasn't prepared for some of the forthcoming changes in policing.

When I accepted my first appointment as chief of police in 1964, I was generally unprepared for the disruption years and civilian review issues beginning in the late 1960's and lasting through the early 1970's. When I accepted my second appointment as chief of police in 1970, I was generally unprepared for such challenges as increasing crime, organizational change, police liability issues, police unionization, cutback management, and police productivity concerns. These challenges continued for police executives through the 1980's.

Regardless of considerable change during the last three decades, the last decade of this century will present police chief executives with unprecedented challenge. It will be a time which requires considerable and significant police leadership. Police management alone will not suffice.

Trends and Their Implications

Let's consider some changing characteristics of our society which have profound implications for police agencies and their leaders. There are currently in our society approximately 10,000,000 cocaine users (10,000 in 1959) and 10,000,000 alcoholics (alcoholic abuse is increasing). Also there are approximately 11,000,000 children (25%) in single-parent homes (increasing 1,000,000/year), 6,000,000 illegal aliens (50% of the population growth), and 29,000,000 senior citizens 65 or older (17,000,000 in 1960). These societal changes to varying degrees have implications for future police service.

There are additional changing-society implications for police executive leadership. The most valuable commodity is no longer gold. It is cocaine which in purer qualities is six or seven times as valuable as gold. In the future other designer drugs will undoubtedly become the most valuable commodity. Crystallized methamphetamines (ice) and synthetic heroin (China white) are examples. Drug trafficking is more lucrative for many who do not have marketable job skills. Drug abuse has generally become a matter of choice. It has unfortunately become more attractive as a coping alternative. Drug testing of arrested of-

fenders confirms a strong link between drug abuse and crime. Drug abuse is estimated to cost our economy approximately \$60,000,000,000 annually including \$35,000,000,000 in lost productivity.

The lottery is today's slot machine. Legal gambling is a big business. Americans spend annually approximately five billion dollars at legal casinos and another five billion with state lotteries. Several additional billion are spend on pari-mutual betting and other forms of legalized gambling. No one knows the amount spent on illegal gambling each year. It is not insignificant.

Our society has become less concerned about crime victim rights than criminal rights. Society has become more permissive toward minor crimes and traffic violations. Our society has become more hedonistic with more and more emphasis on pleasure. There is greater alcoholic abuse which probably results from emphasis on pleasure.

There has been a pornographic explosion in our society. Some who should know from personal experience say there is an influential link between their preoccupation with pornography and their crimes of sexual violence. Other crimes of violence continue with alarming regularity. Assault weapons are involved in such crimes with increasing frequency. Assault weapons have become the weapon of choice for some drug traffickers, domestic terrorists and organized crime families. In addition to assault weapons, there are 60,000,000 handguns in our nation.

Business fraud is approximately forty billion dollars annually. Financial institution embezzlement is four times greater than robbery of such institutions. Computer fraud averages approximately \$450,000 per case investigation, and approximately one in ten offenders are convicted. Counterfeiting has moved from currency to art, jewelry, liquor, and designer items. We now have what is called record piracy. Public corruption is a real problem. There has been considerable erosion of public confidence in public officials.

These societal changes do not present the entire picture. Police chief executives need to seriously consider what futurists are saying about the long-term trends affecting our nation. Futurists describe some "megatrends" which concisely summarized are

- Industrial to service and information technology
- National economy to world economy
- Short term to long term
- Centralized to decentralized
- Either/or to multiple options
- North to South
- Institutional help to self-help
- Representative to participative democracy

These trends will significantly influence our society and economy. They will also require considerable change in our education and productivity.

For example, our labor productivity during the last couple decades has remained fairly stable with no significant increase compared to the tremendous increase in West Germany and Japan. There is more growth in the work force of developing countries than our work force. We are going to be tremendously affected by such global economic implications. Bureau of Labor Statistics reveal that approximately 25 percent of our labor force is involved in manufacturing and construction and approximately 75 percent of our labor force involves the service sector. Approximately 2,000,000 manufacturing jobs have been eliminated since 1979 and are no longer available to our labor force. Automation, robotics and computer applications in manufacturing will not decrease such job eliminations. Such applications will probably result in shorter work weeks and more leisure time. This will also have residual affects for future police service.

Futurists also tell us there will be significant growth in information industries and greater movement toward information technology. In a sense we will become more a basic commodity in business and industry. It is estimated that in the late 1980's approximately 20 percent of American homes have computers, but 80 percent will by the year 2000. Imagine the gambling effect when racing fans will be able to view races from cable television to their homes while placing para-mutual bets through portable terminals linked to the racing track's main computer. Winnings and losses will be credited or debited by computer to bank

accounts, and the Internal Revenue Service will have access to such information. Such computer technology advances in conjunction with cable television into homes have tremendous implications for electronic shopping and ordering many commodities from the home. Also personal computers in the home will enable persons to work from their homes instead of driving to an office or other workplace. This will reduce need for child and elderly care outside the home during adult work hours, peak traffic hour congestion, and vehicle emission pollution.

A future parallel growth will occur in the communications industry. There will be miniature telephones without wires. This will involve satellites connecting telephones. There will be no exception for long distance calls as we know today. All calls will be long distance in the sense that every call will be transmitted via satellite. The ability to locate someone carrying an operating miniature transmitter-receiver will be possible. Through triangulation, a specific signal could be located within a short distance of where that person is. Consider for a moment the potential personal security implications of this. If persons believed they were in danger of criminal violence, they could alert police to their need and location through their miniature portable transmitter-receiver. In fact if they were fleeing from a potential assault, the continuing transmission of the signal via satellite and triangulation would enable police to determine their direction of flight.

Workforce

Futurists also advise us there will be significant change in our work force. Although global economic implications require significant productivity improvement, a general decline of the work ethic will continue in our labor force. Generally tardiness and sick leave abuse will continue to be problematic. Job security and a good pay rate are not the work motivators they were several decades ago. Economic competition and survival implications will result in continued decline of unionization in the public sector. There will be continued shifting of jobs to non-union states or right-to-work states. Futurists also say that labor

needs will diminish in industry. There is a trend to build manufacturing facilities away from large metropolitan areas and relocate along interstate roadways. There isn't the need for availability of large work forces. Within the last decade of this century, 70 percent of new employees will be women and only 10 percent will be white males. Two of three mothers will work outside the home. There will be a significant increase in "latch key" children, i.e., no parent home when the child arrives home from school. Child-care services will continue to rapidly expand. Bureau of Labor Statistics project that women will represent 60 percent of our labor force by the year 2000. Electronic workplaces, robotics, solar energy, electronic shopping and banking and increased concerns about employee wellness will significantly change the future workplace.

All these trends will divide persons who need employment into two broad categories. Those with and those without marketable experience, knowledge and skills. Both categories will have residual implications for future police service. For those without marketable experience, knowledge and skills, they will generally be employable at minimum wage. Such minimum income will preclude many opportunities in our society. It could encourage drug use as an escape mechanism or drug dealing due to its lucrative nature. Both drug-related implications are significantly problematic for the future of policing.

Those who have a good work ethic and possess marketable experience, knowledge and skills will also have future implications for police executive leadership. For example, such police employee applicants with increasing frequency will ask the following regarding your police department

- Opportunities for growth and development?
- Rewards for performance and initiative?
- Flexible job arrangements and assignments?
- Employee assistance programs?
- Employee health, fitness and quality of life?
- Career long training and education?
- Success and promotions of women and minority employees?

- Departmental values and philosophy?
- Do people enjoy working with the department?

These employees with increasing frequency in the future will demand

- Interesting and challenging work.
- Enough help, equipment, information and authority to do the work.
- Good pay and benefits.
- Opportunity to think for themselves.
- Recognition for good work.
- Realizing the end results or closure for their work.
- Competent managers and supervisors who will listen to them and respect them.

Visionary Leadership

All this will involve considerable challenge for police executives in the future. Such challenge will have internal and external implications for the police department. It will involve both police and citizens. It will require considerable leadership, vision and influence. Visionary leadership will be needed on a much broader scope. Not only must police executives envision what their organizations should be, they must have a strategy for realizing that vision. Corporate strategy for a police organization will subsequently be considered in more detail. The police executive must also have the influential power to implement such strategy. Such implementation involves considerable risk and vulnerability. More will be stated later regarding survival skills for police executives. However, the potential rewards and gains associated with thoughtful risks are significant. Therefore, there must be genuine commitment to persevere. This is a process of changing organizational culture over five or more years.

Visionary police leadership involves articulate, persuasive, unambiguous communication of the vision. Such leadership focuses on what and why. What the police organization could

and should become and why. Such leadership requires decisions and actions consistent with the vision. It also involves expanding those decisions and actions in a continuing manner in the organization.

Visionary police leadership requires considerable influential power to enlist staff commitment to the vision. It will involve direction and development of staff to realize their potential in providing excellent police services. It will include a stewardship commitment to a considerable public investment of funds and authority. This will require a significant subscription to productivity and accountability. It will certainly involve constitutional accountability. Such visionary leadership is based upon sensitivity and responsiveness to citizen perceptions, expectations and concerns regarding police service. The essence of such vision is that police-citizen collaboration is essential if any significant progress is to be made regarding crime control, order maintenance, and police service. Mutual problem-solving and community-based efforts between police and citizens are critical factors in visionary police leadership.

Obviously this will require considerably different police leadership than we have traditionally experienced. It will require direction, development and delegation of staff. It will involve charting a course of direction into the future. It will include development of staff in an enabling environment conducive to personal growth and realization of potential. It will require specific and appropriate delegation. Such delegation includes staff understanding that they do not have authority to not decide or act in specified problem-solving situations.

Exhortation

All this involves team building and teamwork. But this is easier said than done. Police departments usually are tradition bound. Generally police officers are not particularly inclined to change and become a model police agency on the vanguard of progress. Police organizational culture, civil service protection, labor contract provisions and arbitration decisions are not always conducive to good stewardship of public funds invested in police services.

Excellent leadership has been described in such books as *In Search of Excellence*, *A Passion for Excellence*, *Creating Excellence* and *The Renewal Factor*. However before a police chief executive rushes to embrace the leadership concepts described in these books, he should be aware of significant differences between the work environments involved and the realities of police work. The great majority of work organizations described in those books was in the private sector. Most of the circumstances involved competition in the market place or the crisis of economic survival. Many of the situations described involved profit sharing or work performance bonuses for employees. Some work settings didn't involve an employee union. Civil service job security wasn't involved for marginal work achievement.

I submit that private sector market place competition and economic survival are tremendous motivators unavailable in the public sector. These motivators result in serious consideration of new options to not only survive but thrive. Employee profit sharing and performance bonuses are significant employee incentives. There is considerable difference between job security based on economic survival and job security based on civil service without market place competition.

I long ago concluded that a serious threat of economic survival for an entire police organization (not simply cutback management resulting in lay off of a few less senior officers) would result in significant quality and productivity improvement in police services. Unfortunately lack of market place competition for police generally impedes serious commitment to improve the quality and productivity of law enforcement and police agencies.

This is not to say the leadership lessons from current literature are of no value to police executives. They do provide a valuable frame of reference. However, implementation of private sector leadership successes in a police organization would involve considerable difficulty without serious commitment by all to improve quality and productivity of police services. This would require a personal commitment by all not just to survive but to thrive in their environment.

Concisely stated the role of supervisors is to ensure that the work is done. The role of managers is to ensure that the work can be done (in terms of resources). The role of the executive

pertains more to direction and the future. In other words the police executive should be concerned with organizational direction into the future. Where are we as an organization? Where should we be? How do we get from here to there in the future? Obviously it is not possible to know the future with all clarity. However, trends and forecasting by futurists can provide general awareness for police chief executives.

Summary

Some final thoughts before leaving the subject of the future and its implications for police leadership. Police executives have a tendency to direct their organizations into the future through a rut. This rut often is a comfort zone involving the familiar, traditional or convenient status quo. It is important, particularly with regard to the future and visionary leadership not to mistake the edge of the rut for the horizon. Also police executives seldom get hit by the future between the eyes, usually they get it in the temple. In other words, looking into the future in only one direction has a consequence of visionary blindness. Police executives involved in visionary leadership must frequently view all the horizon. This is necessary to maintain an awareness of important changes and community expectations which occur that affect their organizations. There are several related questions. How accurately do we anticipate these changes and expectations? How consistent are our practices to these changes and expectations? How committed are we to modify our practices consistent with these changes and expectations in order to grow and thrive (not just survive) in our environment?

A final story before leaving the future. It has considerable relevance for police chief executives involved in visionary leadership.

Once upon a time, there was a man who had a cabin in the mountains and a Porsche to get there. Every Saturday morning, he would drive up to his cabin on a very dangerous road filled with blind curves, unguarded dropoffs, and tricky turns.

But this man was not bothered by the danger. After all, he had a great car to drive, he was an excellent driver, and he knew the road like the back of his hand.

One fine Saturday morning, he was driving to his cabin. He was coming up to one of his favorite blind curves. He slowed down, shifted gears, and put on the brakes in preparation for the turn which was about two hundred yards away. All of a sudden, from around that curve, came a car careening almost out of control! The car nearly went off the cliff but, at the last second, its driver pulled the car back onto the road. The car swerved in his lane, then back into its lane, then back into his lane again. He slowed almost to a stop.

The car came roaring on toward him, swerving back and forth. Just before it was about to hit him - at the last moment - it swung back into its lane. As it went past him, a beautiful woman stuck her head out the window of the car and yelled at him "PIG!!"

What!! he thought, how dare she call me that! He was incensed by her accusation! Instantly he yelled after her, "SOW!!" as she continued down the road.

"I was in my lane! She was the one who was all over the place!" he muttered to himself. Then he began to get control of his rage; he smiled and was pleased that at least she didn't get away without his stinging retort. He had gotten her good, he thought smugly.

And with that, he put the accelerator to the floor, raced around that blind curve . . . and ran into the pig!"¹

There is a relevant moral to this story for police chief executives, visionary leadership, and future implications for both. During the last decade of this century and approaching the year 2000, some people will be coming around blind curves shouting or emotionally saying things at you. Often it will only be in passing. But are you listening with discernment? Do you hear only threats? Or do you hear opportunity? The choice of which you hear is entirely yours.

ENDNOTES

1. Barker, J.: *Discovering the Future: The Business of Paradigms*. St. Paul, MN: ILI Press, 1988, pp. 137-138.